

The Puerto Rican Educators' Association Inc. of New Jersey, a non profit organization established in 1978, has repeatedly demonstrated a commitment to students through its annual scholarship program. This year, as has been the case for the past five years, it is indeed a pleasure to share the names of the three finalists who will receive monetary awards at their respective schools during the traditional awards assembly. Lourdes Gonzalez, a graduate of Science High School in Newark, ranking sixth in her graduating class, is one of the three winners. Lourdes plans to pursue a medical career; is extremely active in her church choir and on the "Medical Explorers Club". She is community-minded planning to utilize her education to help improve her neighborhood.

The second recipient of the PREA award is Wilson Torres, the number five senior at Barringer High School. Wilson will be attending Stevens Institute of Technology on a full time basis in the fall and has, for the past two years, formed part of the Stevens Technical Enrichment Program (STEP). Carpentry and playing chess are high on his list of favorite hobbies. He has always dreamed of building his own computerized Corvette and he may do just that while completing his Ph.D. in the field of mechanical engineering.

Rafael Viquez will be giving the valedictory address to his friends and teachers at the number one student of Malcolm X. Shabazz High School in Newark. His academic average is well over 3.85 which has helped considerably in getting him the respect and admiration of teachers and students alike. He is an active member of the ASPIRA Club at Shabazz and a participant in the Newark Black Achievers Program. Rafael raises tropical fish and birds; enjoys astronomy, and hopes to some day be an inspiration to other students, admitting that he has been motivated to succeed by peers. He does not feel that anyone should make excuses for not succeeding. His plans definitely include success at Rutgers University where he will pursue the field of linguistics in the hope of becoming a translator.

In addition to the three monetary awards, another out-standing and deserving student, Claribel Cuevas from Arts High School, will be awarded a plaque in memory of Juan (Johnny) Casco, former attendance counselor, PREA member and advocate for the fine and performing arts. Claribel is the top student in her graduating class at Arts High School. She will be attending Yale University where she was recently accepted as a result of her outstanding academic achievement and drive to succeed. She is very active in her church and with the "Young Women's Club", a group that entertains discussions on the many aspects of modern life and religion. She finds great enjoyment in reading the classics and is intrigued by foreign languages. She plans on studying several of them with French as her first choice, being already fluent in both English and Spanish. Her goal is to become an interpreter.

Final selection of the winners was conducted by the organization's Scholarship Committee chaired by Gloria E. Ramos, Supervisor with the Newark Board of Education and a member of several scholarship committees.

Other speakers include Carmen Perez, the president of PSEA, Iris Martinez-Arroyo, Director of Newark's Bilingual Program; Yolanda Howell, C.S.A., Teacher at Dr. William Horton School; Olga Lopez, Needs Assessment Specialist; and Jose Rivera, Social Studies teacher at Barringer High School.

The organization sponsors a teacher's recognition dinner dance with all proceeds going to the scholarship fund. This year's dance will be held at Gus Rose's Restaurant in Newark on June 30, 1983. Speech recognition will be given to Dr. Fidiberto Soto, principal at Roberto Clemente Elementary School and member of the organization for many years. Mr. Hector Ortiz recently elected Board Member will be honored also for his commitment to the Newark community.